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MEMORIAL DAY EXERCISES

Teachers' Help Series

MEMORIAL DAY

EXERCISES
FOR THE
SCHOOL-ROOM

COMPILED BY

E. ISABEL REVELL

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MEMORIAL DAY

Flag and Flowers

ANNA COVELL

Introduction

(For an Older Pupil)

What meaneth the hush in the sweet May air,
The reverent look, and the head made bare?
And why do the drums play softly a dirge,
Mournful and slow, as the pines on the verge
Of the cliff, when the soft wind through them sighs,
Or the breath of evening on the lake dies?
And why do the people with solemn tread
Silently go to the homes of the dead?
Why do they sing and then offer a prayer?
And why their swords and uniforms wear?
And what the meaning of flags and the flowers,
The tears that are shed in these May day hours?
Emblems of beauty and Country here meet,
And mingle together beneath our feet.
To the "silent city" the children come,
And follow the soldiers with muffled drum;
And near the fair flags, on the graves, they place

Their beautiful flowers; and, sobered in face,
They softly return and fall into line,
Pray, tell the meaning of all this time,
What means this *Decoration?*

The Flag

(For Seven Boys)

First boy

What means the flag above the grave
Of each true soldier sleeping?
Why should our nation's emblem wave,
As though fond guard 'twere keeping?
Does he, who sleeps beneath the sod,
Know of its soft caressing:
Can he feel its touch when the breezes nod —
That soft touch like a blessing?

Second boy

The soldier sleeps his long, last sleep,
He knows not of its waving;
His life was hushed in silence deep,
His country's honor saving.
But unto *us*, who softly tread
Above his couch of resting,
It speaks for him, its every thread
A noble thought suggesting.

Third boy

Yes, boys, for us, our Nation's boys,
In every breeze is ringing

That watchword low, amid our joys,
Its every echo singing
The tender chant, the sweet refrain,
The ever living story,
That bids us on, new heights to gain
Upon the path of glory.

Fourth boy

Across the flag, the stripes of *red*
With history are teeming;
Fierce battles fought, dear heroes dead
Are symbols of their meaning.
And as I read I almost crave
I'd paid that price of glory,
And fallen in an honored grave,
With those of olden story.

Fifth boy

Some choose the crimson, full of blood,
To speak for them their meaning;
To me, the red stripe's scarlet flood,
With less of valor seeming
Than *white*, which tells of peace's bright day,
This day, in which we're living,
'Mid books and schools and culture's sway,
When each to all is giving.

Sixth boy

Well, boys, I think the nation's voice
Speaks out in words the plainest,

When, pointing to each separate ***star***,
She fondly says: "Thou reignest."
For every star but means a state,
And more are coming yearly;
That all will come in soon or late,
Is reasoning most clearly.

Seventh boy

Now, schoolmates all, can you not see
Why o'er each soldier sleeping,
Our Nation's emblem bright should be,
As though fond guard 'twere keeping?
'Tis right that o'er each soldier's grave
This emblem should be waving,
Since for that flag his life he gave,
His country's honor saving.

All

(Let each boy carry a small flag and wave it during this recitation.)

Then let us proudly wave its bars,
Our truth and honor plighting
To keep unsoiled its sacred stars
In times of peace or fighting.
And let us softly place it o'er
The graves of heroes lowly,
Since they its cause so nobly bore,
Its honor kept so holy.

The Flowers

(For Seven Girls. Let each girl carry some flowers.)

First girl

Tell me, of all these flowers so sweet,
What is the fragrant meaning,
As from so many graves, they greet,
Each fond face earthward leaning?
And why are flowers of red and white
With blue so often mingling —
Pure daisies sweet, red roses bright,
And blue-bells dainty dingling?

Second girl

Beneath each sod, a soldier sleeps
Within his sealed portal.
Behold, a nation o'er him weeps!
And these the signs immortal
Of love and honor; grateful life
His mem'ry ever blessing;
Each flower a thought with fragrance rife,
His resting place caressing.

Third girl

The nation's emblems here behold!
The red and white entwining
A field of blue, and, fold on fold,
Our country's stars enshrining.
'Tis due to him who saved these stars,
And for their sake is sleeping,

That o'er his couch, these flowery bars
Their fragrant watch are keeping.

Fourth girl

Then bring the pansies quaint and sweet,
The dark *blue* pansies, seeming
Almost to speak, as they gravely greet,
With faces wise, their meaning.
The pansies stand for thoughts, they say;
And thoughts we all are giving
To those dear heroes dead to-day,
And to their comrades living.

Fifth girl

And bring the daisies, pure and *white*,
And hear what they are telling:
"Farewell!" they say, "Farewell — good night!"
A requiem sad they're knelling.
Yet as they speak, they upward gaze,
As if to God they're giving
Their heart-felt thanks, their loudest praise,
For hopes of future living.

Sixth girl

Let *red*-lipped roses join the throng,
Their bursting hearts o'erflowing
With music of their daily song,
The sweetness of their growing.
The perfume of their fragrant breath
Is *love*, the secret telling

That sent our heroes to their death,
Our hearts' best love compelling.

Seventh girl

Now, as you see these flowers so sweet,
Know you the fragrant meaning,
As from so many graves they greet
Each fond face earthward leaning?
'Tis right that o'er each hero's grave
These living flags are waving,
Since for *our flag* his life he gave,
His country's honor saving.

All

Then let us yearly deck the mounds,
Our sacred promise giving,
That flowers and flags upon these grounds
Shall meet while we are living.
And let us gently drop a tear
On graves of heroes lowly,
And breathe a blessing o'er their bier —
Our country's heroes holy!

Quotations for Memorial Day and How to Use Them

C. H. Stanley

The quotations may be used in various ways which will readily suggest themselves. The difficulty is generally in being able to lay one's hands upon such things at the moment when they are wanted. Any teacher can adopt them to her school. The following ways of using them are suggested:

For Roll-Call

Copy the quotations or numbered slips and give one to each pupil who has not been able to provide his own. When the roll is called let each respond to his name by giving the quotation which should have been memorized.

For a Responsive Exercise

Group eight or ten quotations together and you will have an exercise for eight or ten children, with very little for each one to recite. In every school there are always a few who can recite well and effectively, but there are just as invariably many who cannot, and yet they may all be interested and eager to take part. Such an exer-

cise provides for the patriotic "many" as well as the talented "few."

Quotations

First pupil

"Peace to the brave who nobly fell
Beneath our flag, their hope and pride!
They fought like heroes long and well,
And then like heroes died."

— *W. T. Adams*

Second pupil

"Bring flowers, to strew again
With fragrant purple rain
Of lilacs, and of roses white and red,
The dwellings of our dead — our glorious dead."

Third pupil

"Do you know, O men now lying
In the low and chilly bed,
That we, the slowly dying,
Are giving a day to the dead?"

Fourth pupil

"Death will find us soon or later,
On the deck or in the cot,
And we cannot meet him better
Than in working out our lot."

— *Whittier*

Fifth pupil

"Whether on the scaffold high,
Or in the battle's van,
The fittest place for man to die
Is where he dies for man."

Sixth pupil

"Bring laurel wreaths, and blossoms sweet and rare,
To grace their graves who died to save the land."

Seventh pupil

"This is a day of peace,
Let party hatred cease
And bitter strife;
Let Peace her scepter sway
Throughout our land to-day,
May pride be swept away
And love be rife."

Eighth pupil

"Strew the fair garlands where slumber the dead
Ring out the strains like the swell of the sea;
Heartfelt the tribute we lay on each bed;
Sound o'er the brave the refrain of the free."

— *S. F. Smith*

Ninth pupil

"They are nobly crowned and sainted
Who with grief have been acquainted
To make a nation truly free."

Tenth pupil

"Yet do thy work; it shall succeed
In thine or in another's day."

— *Whittier*

Eleventh pupil

"He's true to God who's true to man;
Whenever wrong is done
To the humblest and the weakest
'Neath the all-beholding sun,
That wrong is also done to us;
And they are slaves most base,
Whose love of right is for themselves,
And not for all the race."

Twelfth pupil

"And how can man die better
Than facing fearful odds,
For the ashes of his fathers
And the temple of his gods?"

Thirteenth pupil

"Dear to each heart are the names of the brave;
Resting in glory, how sweetly they sleep!
Dewdrops at evening fall soft on each grave,
Kindred and stranger bend fondly to weep."

Fourteenth pupil

"Let fragrant tributes, grateful, tell
Where live the free, where sleep the brave."

Fifteenth pupil

The well-known lines, "The Blue and the Gray," by Judge Finch of New York, were drawn out in 1867, by the beautiful action of the women of Columbus, Mississippi, who, on Memorial Day, had strewed flowers impartially — "alike for the friend and the foe" — on the graves of Confederate and Federal soldiers.

Sixteenth pupil

"From the silence of sorrowful hours
The desolate mourners go,
Lovingly laden with flowers,
Alike for the friend and the foe —
Under the sod and the dew
Waiting the judgment day:
Under the roses, the Blue;
Under the lilies, the Gray."

— *Finch*

Seventeenth pupil

"No more shall the war-cry sever,
Or the winding rivers be red:
They banish our anger forever,
When they laurel the graves of our dead —
Under the sod and the dew
Waiting the judgment day,
Love and tears for the Blue;
Tears and love for the Gray."

— *Finch*

Eighteenth pupil

"Rest, comrades, rest and sleep!
The thoughts of men should be
As sentinels to keep
Your rest from danger free."

— *Longfellow*

Nineteenth pupil

"Your silent tents of green
We deck with fragrant flowers;
Yours has the suffering been,
The memory shall be ours."

— *Longfellow*

Twentieth pupil

"Graves on the green hillside!
Graves on the plain!
O'er them as spring returns
Weep we again.
Noble and valiant men, loyal and true,
Fairest, most fragrant flowers o'er their graves strew."

— *Mary Hume Dongine*

Twenty-first pupil

"Scatter your flowers alike to-day,
Over the graves of the Blue and Gray.
Time has healed all the Nation's scars,
Peace has hushed all the noise of wars,
And North and South, and East and West,
There beats but one heart in the Nation's breast."

— *Mary N. Robinson*

Twenty-second pupil

"Breathe balmy airs, ye fragrant flowers,
O'er every silent sleeper's head."

Twenty-third pupil

"I with uncovered head
Salute the sacred dead,
Who went and who return not."

— *James Russell Lowell*

Twenty-fourth pupil

"A glory clothes the land from sea to sea,
For the great land and all its coasts are free."

— *Bryant*

Twenty-fifth pupil

"Till the mountains are worn out and the rivers forget to flow, till the clouds are weary of replenishing springs, and the springs forget to gush, and the rills to sing, shall their names be kept fresh with reverent honors which are inscribed upon the National Remembrance."

— *H. W. Beecher*

Twenty-sixth pupil

"Though nations may combat and war's thunders rattle,
He heeds not, he hears not, he's free from all pain;
He sleeps his last sleep, he has fought his last battle,
No sound can awake him to glory again."

Twenty-seventh pupil

So let our heroes rest
Upon your sunny breast;
Keep them, O South, our tender hearts and true,

Keep them, O South, and learn to hold them dear
From year to year!
Never forget
Dying for us, they died for you,
This hallowed dust should knit us closer yet!

— *T. B. Aldrich*

Twenty-eighth pupil

Not there, but risen, redeemed they go
Where all the paths are sweet with flowers;
They fought to give us peace, and lo!
They gained a better peace than ours.

— *Phœbe Cary*

Twenty-ninth pupil

O heart, sore tried! thou hast the best
That heaven itself could give thee — rest.

— *Whittier*

Thirtieth pupil

Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.

— *Bible*

In Memory of Our Fallen Heroes

EMMA TAYLOR

Each speaker should have a bouquet of flowers. It would be well if they should carry a banner bearing an appropriate motto or each child have a card with one word on it, and all the words forming the following lines:

Soldier rest, thy warfare o'er,
Dream of battlefields no more.

First speaker

Remember the soldiers, children,
Remember them all with flowers!
Theirs was the battle and theirs the pain,
Ours is the peace and ours the gain;
Theirs was the sowing, the harvest ours —
And all we can give them to-day is flowers!

— *E. C. Dowd*

Second speaker

To the memory of the dead,
Lay above the honored head,
Flowers, sweet flowers.
Over hearts that ceased to beat,
In the battle's smoke and heat,
Scatter flowers, rare flowers.

— *Francis M. Hawley*

Third speaker

Ah, never shall the land forget
How gushed the life-blood of her brave —
Gushed, warm with hope and courage yet,
Upon the soil they fought to save.

— *W. C. Bryant*

Fourth speaker

When the sun of Liberty
Grows dim to mortal eyes,
From out the gloom, like radiant stars,
The world's true heroes rise.

— *Mrs. Botta*

So linked thy ways to those of God
So follow firm the heavenly laws,
That stars may greet the warrior-browed,
And storm-sped angels hail thy cause.

— *Julia Ward Howe*

Fifth speaker

Beautiful is the death-sleep
Of those who bravely fight
In their country's holy quarrel,
And perish for the right.

— *W. C. Bryant*

Sixth speaker

And they no longer weep,
Here, where complaint is still!

And they no longer feel,
Here, where all gladness flies!
And the cypresses
Softly o'ershadowed,
Until the angel
Calls them, they slumber.

— *Longfellow, from the German*

Seventh speaker

Evermore that turf lie lightly,
And, with future showers,
O'er thy slumbers fresh and brightly
Blow the summer flowers.

— *Whittier*

Eighth speaker

Fast asleep the boys are lying, in their low and narrow tents,
And no battle-cry can wake them, and no orders call them hence;
And the yearnings of the mother and the anguish of the wife,
Cannot with their magic presence call the soldier back to life.

— *Will Carleton*

Ninth speaker

And the brother's manly sorrow and the father's mournful pride,
Cannot give back to his country him who for his country died.

They who for the trembling Nation in its hour of trial bled,
Lie, in these, its years of triumph, with our Army of the Dead.

— *Will Carleton*

Tenth speaker

From the silence of sorrowful hours,
The desolate mourners go
Lovingly laden with flowers,
Alike for the friend and the foe.

All

Under the sod and the dew,
Waiting the judgment day;
Under the roses, the Blue,
Under the lilies the Gray,

Eleventh speaker

No more shall the war-cry sever,
Or the winding rivers be red;
They banish our anger forever,
When they laurel the graves of our dead!

All

Under the sod and the dew,
Waiting the judgment day;
Love and tears for the Blue;
Tears and love for the Gray.

— *F. M. Finch*

Our Soldiers

OLIVE E. DANA

Above the platform should be draped the largest and handsomest flag obtainable. Portraits of Lincoln, Grant, Sherman, Garfield, and others who rendered conspicuous service should be displayed. If there are or have been men who were prominent in the Civil War, or whose bravery is locally recognized, who went from or have since been identified with the town, let their portraits be shown also, or have their names appear in the decorations, which should be as numerous and beautiful as it is possible to have them. Let each child salute the flag as he comes forward to speak.

Song

(TUNE: "America.")

Our soldiers, 'tis of you,
To faith and freedom true,
  Of you we sing.
Our land's at rest to-day,
Its strifes have passed away —
  Our praise we bring!

Rest in your grassy beds,
While bloom a nation spreads
  On each appears;
We, too, will love our land
And serve with loyal hand,
  In all the years!

Recitation

Class

'Tis longer ago than we can remember —
Three times or four times as long as our years,
The time since they went for freedom's defending,
Away to the battle, with cheers and 'mid tears.

Longer ago than we can remember,
Some of them, some of them only, returned.
Wounded and weary, but bringing in triumph
The flag where the stars, unblotted, still burned.

Song

(TUNE: "Star-Spangled Banner")

They came with our flag borne proudly in sight,
Who went, for its sake, their lives to surrender;
'Twas tattered and torn, but with stars burning bright
As now, when we give it our homage so tender.

(*All salute the flag*)

While the star-spangled banners in triumph still wave
O'er the land of the free, and the home of the brave!

Class (*continues*)

Longer ago than we can remember,
Were the muskets laid down, for the battles were done;
The red, white, and blue o'er a nation of freemen
Was unfurled, and the cause of our liberties won!

'Tis longer ago than we can remember,
But the peace, and the hope, and the freedom we share,
Ours is the gift, and theirs is the glory,
And once more early blossoms our loving hands bear.

'Twas longer ago than we can remember,
But we praise them, and love them, and thank them to-day.
Our hearts are athrill with gratitude tender,
As the flag and a flower above them we lay.

Exercise

Each child bears a small flag, and each brings a handful of the flowers he names. And as they begin, the teacher places upon the blackboard or in some conspicuous place the word "OUR," in evergreen or in flowers; while as each child speaks she must put in position another letter, formed of flowers like those he holds, till all have finished, and the word "SOLDIERS" has been formed. As flowers come into blooming so much earlier or later in different localities and latitudes, other kinds may sometimes have to be substituted for those here given, but their names should begin, severally, with these same letters.

SYRINGAS

I bring *S*yringas, sweet as their memories are; and they are, too, one of our country's own colors.

OAK LEAVES

I have gathered the fresh young *O*ak leaves, and have made them into a wreath of honor.

LILIES

These *L*ilies I bring, all spotless as their fame.

DANDELION

I gathered these *D*andelions from the fields and the roadsides where some of *them* used to play, as we do, now.

IVY

I brought *I*vy, because it lives so long, and because it clings always so closely . So it is with *their* deeds, and with our thoughts of them.

EVERLASTING

I bring *E*verlasting flowers.

(*Displays immortelles, some of which have been colored blue and yellow and red, but the most of which are white.*)

ROSES

It is not time for *R*oses, but these have come earlier than their mates, for this very day. This white one is from a bush that a soldier boy transplanted, and used to love.

SOUTHERNWOOD

And this bit of *S*outhernwood came from an old-fashioned garden that has hardly been changed since one of *them* made and tended it.

Class (*continues*)

'Twas longer ago than we can remember,
But our land and its laws, and each well-guarded home
Are ours now because the need found them ready
To march with brave hearts, to the bugle and drum.

'Twas longer ago than we can remember,
But they tell us the story with low voices yet,
The story of men who brave were and tender,
And whose gift to our country we will not forget.

(*Close with a patriotic song.*)

Memorial Day

LIZZIE M. HADLEY

First pupil

A hush is in the solemn air,
And lo! with muffled drum,
And measured tread of marching feet,
I see an army come.
Not beardless boys with youth's hot blood,
And youth's free, bounding pace,
But grizzled men, all battle-scarred,
With age marks on each face.
Not soldiers bound for battlefields,
Yet o'er their heads, we see
Slow waving in the soft spring breeze,
The old flag fair and free.
Why come they here with solemn tread,
In springtime's fairest hours,
While hands that once the sabre bore
Are laden now with flowers?

Second pupil

O, when the dreadful tide of war
Our good ship would o'erwhelm,
'Twas they, who as one man sprang forth
And bravely seized the helm.

First pupil

What do they here?

Second pupil

Ah, child, they come
With dirge and solemn tread
To deck with nature's fairest flowers
Each soldier's slowly bed,
They are but few — the others sleep —
But these in loving way
From year to year will keep alive
Our grand Memorial Day.

All

O, long as that old flag shall wave
Abcve each soldier's honored grave,
Yes, long as Time shall tell the hours,
Each year we'll deck these graves with flowers.

Recitation

(For four little girls)

First girl

See! here are spring-time violets, meek,
Heaped o'er each lowly bed,
A fragrant mound of white and blue,
They guard our honored dead.

Second girl

I bring you lilies, fair and sweet,
O, toll each perfumed bell,
And to the land they died to save,
These soldier's brave deeds tell.

Third girl

See! roses with their hearts of gold,
To all their fragrant breath
Shall whisper of the soldiers brave
Who sleep to-day in death.

Fourth girl

Here's laurel, with its blushing blooms
A tribute for the brave,
What better offering need we lay
Upon a hero's grave?

All

So with these blossoms will we deck
With each returning year,
The low green mounds where sweetly sleep
The men we hold so dear.

Song

Rest, soldier, rest,
No more by care oppressed,
Thy deeds within our hearts we'll shrine,

A grateful nation's tears are thine.
Rest thee, soldier, rest thee, soldier,
Rest, soldier, rest,
Within the earth's green breast.

A Decoration Day Program

M. L. Sutton

For school-room decoration on this occasion, use bunting, evergreens, red, white, and blue flowers, and when possible, the pictures of military heroes, suitably draped.

Instead of having blackboard space filled with "show" problems or left vacant have the best penmen among the pupils, copy upon them suitable quotations, surrounded by wreaths in colored crayon work made from stencils or at your directions.

On one board beneath crossed flags:

It made and preserved us a nation!
The union of lakes — the union of lands —
The union of States none can sever —
The union of hearts — the union of hands —
And the Flag of our Union forever!

On another board, surrounded by a wreath of lilies-of-the-valley:

Enough of merit has each name,
To shine untarnished on the walls of fame,
And add new lustre to the historic page.

This quotation from Longfellow —

War is a terrible trade! but in a cause that is righteous,
Sweet is the smell of powder" —

is also very suitable.

Invitations to be extended to the friends and patrons may be cut from common writing paper in the form of shields. On the

lower portions write the invitation in red ink, on the upper parts the date, time, and place in blue ink. The making of these invitations will be a source of great pleasure and enthusiasm for the older pupils.

Song — "America"

(By the school.)

Address "Decoration Day"

(By the teacher.)

Quotations

First pupil

Flag of the rainbow and banner of stars,
Emblem of light and shield of the lowly;
Never to droop while our soldiers and tars
Rally to guard it from outrage unholy.
Never may shame or misfortune attend it,
Enmity sully or treachery rend it,
While but a man is left to defend it,
Flag of the rainbow and banner of stars.

Second pupil

God bless the flag! let it float and fill
The sky with its beauty; our heart-strings thrill
To the low, sweet chant of its wind-swept bars,
And the chorus of all its clustering stars.
Embrace it, O mothers, and heroes shall grow,
While its colors blush warm o'er your bosoms of snow,
Defend it, O fathers, there's no sweeter death,

Than to flaunt its fair folds with a soldier's last breath.
And love it, O children, be true to the sires,
Who wove it in pain by the old camp fires.

— *Samuel L. Simpson*

Song — "Our Tribute"

(By the school.)

Hail to the flag of Columbia — happy land!
Hail to the banner received from Freedom's hand!
In its stars are hues of heaven,
God's choicest boon is given,
Long wave our beauteous banner, then,
All hail, red white, and blue!

When on the fields of carnage, death and strife,
To save this banner was yielded many a life,
The dying deeds of soldiers true,
With glories' stars bedecked the blue,
And gave the life-blood's scarlet hue,
Unto our banner fair.

We ne'er can pay the debt of love we owe
To those who serv'd our noble country so.
Give glory to the hero band,
Who died to save our Fatherland,
Their monument our flag shall stand,
Forever o'er them wave.

'Neath its bright folds have thousands lain to rest;
Men have died gladly with it about their breasts;

Then place the flag that heaven gave,
With garlands sweet on every grave,
A fitting tribute to the brave,
This flag they loved so well.

Have the school standing while this song is being rendered, and with its closing line, have the pupils trained to a spontaneous, united salute of our colors, arranged in a prominent place.

"What Flowers Shall We Bring?"

(By three little girls.)

Each one as she comes upon the stage, bears a wreath of the flower she recommends, holds it while reciting, and places it upon the teacher's desk as she leaves the platform. The last one bears a small flag with her wreath.

First girl

Bring roses fresh with morning dew,
A fitting tribute to the true.
Lay the garlanded blossoms red,
On each grave of the honored dead,
For the precious blood they shed —
Our heroes dear!

Second girl

Bring lilies from the valleys low,
Fragrant bells as pure as snow.
Like the spirits still and light
That rose so thickly over the fight —
That stole away in the dead of night —
From our boys in blue.

Third girl

Forget-me-nots and pansies sweet,
Alone can make the gift complete,
Never forgot to dare and do,
Our country's glory to renew,
Honor forever, the red — white — blue —
Our tribute fair.

Recitation — "The Blue and the Gray"

By the flow of the inland river,
Whence the fleets of iron have fled,
Where the blades of the grave-grass quiver,
Asleep are the ranks of the dead —
Under the sod and the dew,
Waiting the judgment day;
Under the one, the Blue;
Under the other, the Gray.

These in the robings of glory,
Those in the gloom of defeat;
All with the battle-blood gory,
In the dusk of eternity meet —
Under the sod and the dew,
Waiting the judgment day;
Under the laurel, the Blue;
Under the willow, the Gray.

From the silence of sorrowful hours,
The desolate mourners go,
Lovingly laden with flowers,

Alike for the friend and the foe —
Under the sod and the dew,
Waiting the judgment day;
Under the roses, the Blue,
Under the lilies the Gray.

So with an equal splendor,
The morning sun rays fall,
With a touch impartially tender,
On the blossoms blooming for all —
Under the sod and the dew,
Waiting the judgment day;
Broidered with gold, the Blue;
Mellow with gold, the Gray.

So, when the summer calleth,
On forest and field of grain,
With an equal murmur falleth,
The cooling drip of the rain —
Under the sod and the dew,
Waiting the judgment day;
Wet with the rain, the Blue;
Wet with the rain, the Gray.

Sadly, but not with upbraiding,
The generous deed was done;
In the storm of the years that are fading,
No braver battle was won —
Under the sod and the dew,
Waiting the judgment day;

Under the blossoms, the Blue;
Under the garlands, the Gray.

No more shall the war-cry sever,
Or the winding rivers be red,
They banish our anger forever,
When they laurel the graves of our dead —
Under the sod and the dew,
Waiting the judgment day:
Love and tears for the Blue;
Tears and love for the Gray.

— *Francis M. Finch*

Recitation — "How Sleep the Brave"

How sleep the brave who sink to rest,
By all their country's wishes blest!
When Spring, with dewy fingers cold,
Returns to deck their hallowed mould,
She there shall dress a sweeter sod,
Than Fancy's feet have ever trod.

By fairy hands their knell is rung,
By forms unseen their dirge is sung,
There Honor comes, a pilgrim gray,
To bless the turf that wraps their clay;
And freedom shall awhile repair,
To dwell a weeping hermit there!

— *William Collins*

Closing Song

(TUNE: "Rose of the Garden," from L. O. Emerson's *Singer's Welcome.* Words by M. L. S. Published by O. Ditson Company.)

Flowers for the soldiers, resting at last;
Labors are over, dangers are past;
Softly they rest by river and sea,
'Neath our fair banner — flag of the tree,
Tears for our heroes and their foes as well;
They were all brothers, though in strife they fell,
Flowers for the soldiers, resting at last;
Labors are over, dangers are past.

Cherish the aged, they who wore the blue;
Our living heroes are yearly more few.
Kind, loving deeds to them are better given
Than all our garlands to the hosts in heaven.
Flowers for the soldiers gathered here to-day,
May a nation's blessings cheer them on life's way.
Hail then, old soldiers! greeting we bring,
Ever may the laurels round your white brows cling.

War or Peace

Flora Helm Krause

Prelude

Scene

School-room being prepared before school-hours for an entertainment by the pupils. During the dialogue, one group drapes a large flag, another arranges flowers on a table, some tack up bunting and small flags, some fix easels, pictures, etc. Let all appear to work quietly and naturally while talking.

(R — right side of stage; C — centre; L — left.)

George (*R on ladder*) Hand me a picture to hang up, John.

John (*brings and hands up picture of Grant*) Here is the hero of the event we celebrate to-day (*military salute*) the man of war!

Bessie (*L draping bunting on an easel holding Lincoln's picture*) *Here* is the hero of the event we celebrate to-day (*with a pretty gesture*) the man of peace!

John (*to Bessie*) We are celebrating the Civil War, aren't we? Isn't the name of Grant, our greatest general, linked inseparably with the progress and success of that war?

George We are not *celebrating* anything, John. This is Memorial Day — a day set aside to recall the memory of

men who did what they could to save the Union and abolish slavery.

Bessie Well, doesn't the name of Lincoln, who issued the Emancipation Proclamation, stand foremost in our memory at such a time?

George (*still on ladder*) They were both great — one in military action, the other in legislative action. They were both men of action and men of principle.

Estelle (*arranging flowers at a table as she recites, making the recitation seem not set and perfunctory but like a part of the conversation*)

God give us men! A time like this demands
Strong minds, great hearts, true faith, and ready hands;
Men whom the lust of office does not kill,
Men whom the spoils of office cannot buy,
Men who possess opinion and a will,
Men who have honor, men who will not lie;
Tall men, sun-crowned, who live above the fog,
In public duty and in private thinking.

— *J. G. Holland*

Mary (*taking up small flags*) Doesn't it seem an odd coincidence that these two heroes of the Civil War came from the same state, Illinois?

(*All drop work and sing with feeling, "Illinois."*)

(*All resume work.*)

George Which your favorite hero is depends on whether you admire peace or war.

All together (*some saying one, some the other*) War, war, war! Peace, peace, peace!

George Max, you are the historian of the class; tell us what war has done for us.

Max (*who has been quietly reading in the corner all this time, now stands with his book in one hand and talks thoughtfully and earnestly, not as in a set speech*) Wars have been the means of disseminating culture and thus creating a new order of things, as, when the Turks captured Constantinople in 1453, the Greeks scattered over Europe. And thus the learning of the ancient Greek was carried into modern Europe and the Revival of Learning broke up the Dark Ages.

Sometimes the culture and progress were brought by the conquering nation, as when the Normans overcame the Saxons, 1066.

The Wars of the Crusades brought the language, the sciences, mathematics, and industries of the Orient into Western Europe. The French Revolution freed one class from the tyranny of another. The War of '76 nicely illustrates how fighting has made a nation independent of unjust government. War has established the liberty of an enslaved race, as the Civil War, whose heroes we remember to-day, did.

Half the group (*interrupting and clapping hands vociferously*) Yes — yes — war is a great thing! On with war!

The other half (*with equal earnestness and waving handkerchiefs*) No — no — peace! Three cheers for peace!

George Well, I'd like to hear what our little peace-maker, Nellie, has to say. Is she here?

All Yes, yes, let's hear from the Peace-maker.

Nellie (*who has been sitting in a corner making flowers from a basket into bouquets. While talking she goes on with*

her flower-work, with a simple, unaffected manner of talking) In times of peace the farmer tills the soil and agriculture flourishes; there is abundance of the necessities of life; they are so cheap, the humblest toiler does not want.

In times of peace the mechanic, the tradesman, the artisan apply their occupations; the plough and the reaper are made for the farmer, tools and machinery keep the trades busy, railroads and ships carry on commerce among the nations.

The scientist, the writer, the artist, the teacher, devote their time and labor to the improvement, instruction, and entertainment of the race. Humanity devotes itself to being healthy, progressive, charitable, humane, and happy.

Love rules instead of hate; we live and let live; our aim is to be happy and to make others happy.

Half the group (*with demonstrations as before*) For peace, three cheers — hip — hip — hurrah!

Other half (*with similar demonstrations*) No — no — justice and progress, by fighting if we must!

George (*taking down ladder and gathering up materials of work*) Well, our entertainment on 'War or Peace" will better decide the question than all our arguments and hurrahing. So — let's all to our parts.

[*Curtain.*]

Part I. — War

Scene I. — Call to War

Girls in group, L and front, dressed as women in outdoor garb waving handerkchiefs to boys as they march.

Bugle-call behind scenes.

Boys enter R, dressed as soldiers. They march and counter-march in military fashion to accompaniment of drum and fife.

All sing "We are Coming, Father Abraham, a Hundred Thousand Strong."

Boys march L, girls waving handkerchiefs or weeping as they go.

Scene II. — Before the Battle

Night scene — tent in background, blanket, knapsack, canteen, gun, and other paraphernalia lying around in confusion. A lighted candle is stuck up, C.

Soldier in undress sits cross-legged, C, with paper-pad in lap, writing letter.

A sentinel marches L. Bugle sounds reveille behind scenes.

Song: "Just Before the Battle Mother."

If the boy taking soldier's part cannot sing it as a solo, have it sung behind scenes by a girl, boy writing during singing.

Scene III. — After the Battle

Soldiers lie or sit on ground in various poses expressing disability, weariness, and pain.

Nurses in costumes of striped dresses, white aprons, and caps, in attendance. One holds head of soldier, one administers water to another, one applies bandage to another's arm; some stand, some kneel on one knee as they administer to patient, some sit, some move noiselessly

from one patient to another, lifting, soothing, administering, etc.

Song (chorus) "Tenting on the Old Camp Ground."

When the chorus is finished soldier, C, with bandaged head (or girl behind scenes) sings solo: "After the Battle, Mother." (This song sometimes goes by the name, "I am Wounded, Mother, Wounded.")

Scene IV. — The Close of the War

Home scene, chair holding drum and draped with flag, C; chorus grouped around it.

Solo (one verse and chorus) "The Vacant Chair."

Song (chorus) "Cover Them Over with Beautiful Flowers."

Part II. — Peace

The decorations may be those the children were arranging in Prelude, patriotic pictures and busts, bunting, flags, and flowers.

First Group, L.

Boy, in costume of '76, with scroll in hand, represents Declaration of Independence.

Boy, blacked and dressed in costume of aged negro, hands shackled with long, dependent chains, grasps a cane which he leans on for support: represents Slavery.

Boy, dressed in costume of '65, with scroll in hand; stands with free arm across shoulder of negro-character in protective manner: represents Emancipation Proclamation.

Boy, in modern costume, with scroll in hand; he is surrounded by a group of boys dressed, if possible, in

national costumes representing Russia, France, Germany, Great Britain, Netherlands, United States, etc. (as many of the European nations, or others, as thought desirable). If costumes are not obtainable, let banners or badges bearing the nations' names distinguish the characters; this boy and group represent The Hague Peace Conference.

Second group, C.

Girl dressed in white with the word "Peace" in large characters embroidered or sewed on sash; stands on elevation and supports a large, white flag on standard.

Before her on either hand are two boys, one in soldier's uniform bearing a gun; the other in officer's uniform bearing a sword. They look at Peace with humility and devotion.

Third group, R.

Consists of boy characters representing farmer, carpenter, mason, sailor, and artist. They are costumed appropriately and have tools that represent their various industries. While the others are speaking, each goes through the motions or takes pose to represent his special form of labor. The group as a whole typifies 'The Industries," or "Labor."

Song by chorus (one stanza and chorus), "America."

Boy of '76 reads from scroll. (The following extracts are from the Declaration of Independence by the Representatives of the United States of America in Congress

assembled July 4, 1776.) We hold these truths to be self-evident — that all men are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. That to secure these rights, governments are instituted among men deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed.

Song (either as solo by negro characters or by chorus behind scenes), "My Old Kentucky Home, Good-Night."

Boy of '65 reads from scroll extract from the Emancipation Proclamation by the President of the United States, Abraham Lincoln: On the first day of January, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and sixty-three, all persons held as slaves within any state or designated part of a state, the people whereof shall be in rebellion against the United States, shall be then, thenceforward, and forever free . . . And upon this act sincerely believed to be an act of justice warranted by the Constitution upon military necessity, I invoke the considerate judgment of mankind and the gracious favor of Almighty God. (When he finishes reading, he removes the shackles from the negro's hands, throws them to the floor, and grasps his right hand with fraternal warmth. The negro grasps his hand and looks grateful.)

The group, R, representing Labor, now recites together these lines by Denis MacCarty, enunciating with clearness and speaking with great force and vivacity:

"Blessed that child of humanity, happiest man among men.
Who, with hammer or chisel or pencil — with rudder of plough-share or pen,
Laboreth ever and ever with hope through the morning of life.
Round swings the hammer of industry, quickly the sharp chisel rings,
And the heart of the toiler hath throbbings that stir not the bosom of kings.
He the true ruler and conqueror — he the true king of his race
Who nerveth his arm for life's combat and looketh the world in the face."

Boy representing The Hague Conference reads from scroll: The International Peace Conference convoked in the best interests of humanity by His Majesty the Emperor of Russia, assembled on the invitation of the government of Her Majesty, the Queen of The Netherlands at The Hague, May 18, 1899, formulated this statement: With a view to obviating, as far as possible, recourse to force in the relations between the States, the signatory powers agree to use their best efforts to insure the *pacific settlement of international difficulties.*

When the reading is finished, the two representing soldier and military officer kneel at Peace's feet and present sword and gun to her. She places them at her feet and then recites with great clearness, strength, and feeling these stanzas from John Ruskin's "Dawn of Peace."

"Awake! awake! the stars are pale, the east is russet gray;
They fade, behold! the phantoms fade that kept the gates of day;
Throw wide the burning valves and let the golden streets be free,
The morning watch is past — the watch of evening shall not be,
Put off — put off your mail, ye kings, and beat your brands to dust!
A surer grasp your hands must know, your heart's a better trust.
Nay, bend a-back the lance's point and break the helmet bar;
A noise is on the morning winds — but not the noise of war.
Among the grassy mountain paths, the glittering troops increase —
They come! they come! How fair their feet — *they come that publish peace.*
Yea, victory! fair victory! our enemies' and ours!
And all the clouds are clasped in light and all the earth with flowers."

A small child (in costume of Columbia, if possible) bearing large United States flag then comes from behind the scenes to the edge of the stage and waves flag, while all on stage (and, if desirable, chorus behind scenes) unite in singing the Anvil Chorus from "Il Trovatore":

God of the nations in glory enthroned,
Upon our loved country thy blessings pour,
Guide us and guard us from strife in the future,
Let Peace dwell among us forevermore!
Proudly our banner now gleams with golden lustre,
Brighter each star shines in the glorious cluster.
Liberty forevermore!
And Peace and Union — and Peace and Union throughout our happy land.

Patriotic Exercises for Memorial Day

Arranged by I. N. M.

The room should be appropriately decorated with flags, bunting, ferns bouquets, and wreaths of flowers, etc. Pictures of soldier heroes may be grouped around the room. Mottoes in fancy letterings may be written upon the blackboards, and may be placed in various places on the walls. Evergreen, flowers, and fancy paper may be used in making the letters for the walled mottoes.

SONG. The Star Spangled Banner.
QUOTATIONS.
RECITATION. Our Standing Army.
SONG. Tramp, Tramp, Tramp.
ACROSTIC. In Memoriam.
RECITATION. The Battle of Blenheim.
RECITATION. The American Flag.
CLASS EXERCISE (Three Boys). The Flag.
SONG. Battle Cry of Freedom.
RECITATION. Barbara Frietchie. — *Whittier*
SONG. In the Woods of Tennessee. (Golden Glees.)
CLASS EXERCISE (Three Children). Sleep, Soldier, Sleep.
RECITATION. The Picket.
RECITATION. Paul Revere's Ride — *Whittier*
RECITATION. Nathan Hale — *Finch.*
SONG. Our Banner.

Suggested Poems

The Nation's Dead — *Alice Cary.*
Cover Them Over — *Will Carleton.*
The Blue and the Gray — *Finch.*
Yorktown — *Whittier.*
The Picket Guard — *Ethelyn Eliot Beers.*
Mother and Poet — *Elizabeth Barrett Browning.*

Quotations

"The American flag means all that is good and true and pure and beautiful in a land of freedom."

"My eyes have grown dim in the service of my country, but I never doubted her justice." —

— *George Washington*

"No man's vote is lost which is cast for the right."

— *J. Q. Adams*

"Our watchword is victory or death; we will enjoy our liberty or perish in the last ditch."

— *Andrew Jackson*

"Scatter your flowers alike to-day
Over the graves of the Blue and Gray,
Time has healed all the Nation's scars,
Peace has hushed all the noise of wars,
And North and South and East and West,
There beats but one heart in the Nation's breast."

"How sleep the brave who sink to rest
By all their country's wishes blest!
When spring with dewy fingers cold,
Returns to deck their hallowed mold,
She there shall dress a sweeter sod
Than Fancy's feet have ever trod."

"Bright be the flowers above your graves,
Ye brave and gallant men,
Whose dauntless souls keep bivouac
In lands beyond our ken —
For whose dear sakes good patriots all
Will keep Memorial Day,
And on each hero's honored grave
Memorial blossoms lay."

Our Standing Army

We have no standing army?
Nay, look around and see!
The man who ploughs the furrow,
The man who fells the tree,
The statesman and the scholar —
At the first word of fear
Turn to their country breathing,
"My mother, I am here!"

Not of a dumb, blind people,
Is this, our army, made;
Where schoolhouse and where steeple
Have cast their friendly shade.
Our army grows in knowledge,

As it to manhood grows,
And, trained in school and college,
Stands ready for its foes.

The brawny arms of gunners
Serve minds alert and keen;
The sailor's thought has traveled
To lands he has not seen.
Not for the joy of killing,
Not for the lust of strife,
Have these come forth with gladness
To offer up their life.

Behold our standing army —
Not, as in other lands,
An army standing idle,
With empty minds and hands —
But each one in his station;
And peaceful victory
Is training for the nation
Heroes of land and sea.

— *Margaret Vandegrift*

In Memoriam

The following acrostic is composed of appropriate quotations from various authors. The letters may be made of pasteboard covered with red, white, and blue paper, with a sprinkling of silver stars pasted upon it. The children might wear sashes of red, white, and blue.

*I*nvincible banner! the flag of the free,
O, where treads the foot that would fetter for thee!

Or the hands to be folded till triumph is won
And the eagle looks proud of old to the sun?
— *Proctor*

*N*o government is safe unless it is protected by the good will of its people.

*M*ayst thou ever be, O land,
Noble and pure as thou art free and strong:
So shalt thou lift a light for all the world
And for all time, and bring the Age of Peace.
— *R. W. Gilder*

*E*arth shall be near to Heaven when all
That severs man from man shall fall,
For, here or there, salvation's plan,
Alone, is love of God and man. — *Whittier*

*M*arching closer together,
Oh! patient ranks of gray!
In silence deep your comrades sleep,
And strife has passed away,
For both we mourn with loving tears:
Brave hearts on either side,
The memory of your noble deeds,
Still thrills our hearts with pride.
— *Angelina W. Wray*

*O*f the Blue or the Gray, what matter to-day!
For each some fond heart weeps;

So, children dear, make the spot less drear
Wherever a soldier sleeps.

*R*emember! we are one country now. Dismiss from your minds all sectional feeling and bring your children up to be, above all, Americans.
— *R. E. Lee*

*I*n the onward moving ages
Can be felt the throb of life,
Larger liberty is coming,
And the end of cruel strife.

*A*ll honor to our hero dead!
Dear as the blood ye gave,
No impious footstep here shall tread
The herbage of your grave;
Nor shall your glory be forgot
While Fame her record keeps,
Or Honor points the hallowed spot
Where valor proudly sleeps. — *O'Hara*

*M*y country, 'tis of thee,
Sweet land of liberty,
Of thee I sing;
Land where my fathers died,
Land of the pilgrim's pride,
From every mountain side
Let freedom ring.

NOTE — The remaining verses of "America" may be sung by the class, if desired.

The American Flag

(For a small boy bearing a flag in one hand.)

Let this banner wave forever;
May its lustrous stars fade never,
  Till the stars shall pale on high;
While there's hope in true hearts beating,
While there's right the wrong defeating,
  Truth and freedom shall not die.

The Flag

(An exercise for three boys.)

First boy (*lifting flag*)

Wave, starry flag, on high!
Float in the sunny sky!
  Stream o'er the stormy tide!
For every stripe of stainless hue,
And every star in field of blue,
Ten thousand of the brave and true
  Have laid them down and died.

Second boy (*lifting flag*)

We are the men of the coming years,
Who will follow wherever that flag appears,
Who, honest and faithful, brave and true,
Will stand by that banner our whole lives through.
If war or dishonor our band should assail,
Our courage, our loyalty, never shall fail,
True to our flag, to our brotherhood true,
We will fight for, yes, die for, the Red, White, and Blue.

Third boy (*raising flag*)

God bless the flag! let it float and fill
The sky with its beauty; — our heartstrings thrill
To the low, sweet chant of its wind-swept bars,
And the chorus of all its clustered stars.
Embrace it, O mothers, and heroes shall grow
While its colors blush warm on your bosoms of snow.
Defend it, O fathers, there's no sweeter death
Than to float its fair folds with a soldier's last breath:
And love it, O children, be true to the sires
Who wove it in pain by the old camp fires.

All

The flag floats east, the flag floats west;
  The skies unveil their glory;
Each stripe reflects the loving light,
  Stars tells to star its story.
From sea to sea, in calm or storm,
  Shine on, O flag, in beauty
For all who walk in freedom's ways,
  For all who died for duty. — *Sel.*

Memorial Flowers

SADIE S. PALMER

(An exercise for four girls.)

First girl

A bunch of fragrant violets
As my offering I have brought,
True blue, as were the soldiers
When for the right they fought.

Second girl

I bring the golden buttercups
So hardy and so brave;
What flowers can be more fitting
To deck a soldier's grave?

Third girl

I bring a bunch of daisies
Some humble grave to crown,
As innocent as the pure young lives
So willingly laid down.

Fourth girl

This bunch of purple lilac
As my offering I bring,
'Tis fragrant as the memory
Of those whose praise we sing.

All

We've often heard the story
Of how the brave men fought,
And as a tribute of our love
These flowers we have brought.
We will ne'er forget the soldiers,
And when we've passed away,
May other hands the flowers bring
Each Decoration Day.

A Roll-Call for Memorial Day

Let each pupil respond with one of the following quotations:

I do love my country's good with a respect more tender, more holy and profound than mine own life.

— *Shakespeare*

Be just and fear not; let all the ends thou aimest at, be thy country's, thy God's and truth's. — *Shakespeare*

Without a sign his sword the brave man draws,
And asks no omen but his country's cause .— *Pope*

Statesman, yet friend to truth! of soul sincere,
In action faithful, and in honor clear;
Who broke no promise, served no private end,
Who gained no title, and who lost no friend.

— *Pope*

What bosom beats not in his country's cause? — *Pope*

And for our country 'tis a bliss to die. — *Pope*

The very essence of a free government consists in considering offices as public trusts bestowed for the good of

the country, and not for the benefit of an individual or a party. — *Calhoun*

One country, one constitution, one destiny. — *Webster*

Whatever makes men good Christians, makes them good citizens. — *Webster*

Liberty exists in proportion to wholesome restraint.
— *Webster*

Liberty and union, now and forever, one and inseparable. — *Webster*

God grants liberty only to those who love it, and are always ready to guard and defend it. — *Webster*

Our father's God! from out whose hand
The centuries fall like grains of sand,
We meet to-day, united, free,
And loyal to our land and Thee,
To thank Thee for the era done,
And trust Thee for the opening one.
— *Whittier*

This nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom, and that government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth. — *Lincoln*

Recitations for Decoration Day

Gettysburg

I stood to-day upon the ridge,
  Where once the blue brigades were massed,
And gazed upon the plain below,
  O'er which the charging columns passed.

And sauntering downward, somewhat sad,
  Among the stones no longer stained,
I came upon a little mound
  That only the front rank had gained;

A little mou d left all alone,
  Unmarked by flower or cypress wreath
To show hat some regretful heart
  Remembered him who slept beneath.

But half-way hidden by the grass,
  I found a broken barrel stave,
The headboard which some foeman's hand
  Had kindly placed upon the grave.

And on it traced these touching words,
  In letters I could scarce divine:

"A rebel, name unknown, who fell,
First in the foremost line."

God's peace be with thee in thy rest,
Lone dweller in a stranger's land,
And may the mold above thy breast
Lie lighter than a sister's hand.

On other brows let careless Fame
Her fadeless wreath of laurel twine,
Enough for thee, thy epitaph:
"First in the foremost line!"

— *New Orleans Picayune*

Under One Flag

Up from the meadow rich,
Up from the serried ditch,
Up from the mountain which
Echoed the fray.
Proudly the heroes tread,
Soft where the heroes dead
Sleep, while the stars o'erhead
Smile on their way.

Under one flag the free
Move on to victory
Grander than ever we
Won in the fight.
See, how its white stripes shine!
See, how its brave stars line!

God, let them ever twine
  Union and light!

Hushed now the cannon's vent,
Healed now the sabre's rent,
On peace the gray intent,
  On peace the blue;
Vanished the hate, the heat,
None now our free flag greet,
But they who cheer it meet
  As freemen do.

So to their graves we bring
Thy sweetest blossoms, Spring,
And dirges deep to sing
  How brave they tried;
For one this bud of blue,
For one this bough of yew;
Bravely they fought and true,
  Bravely and died. — *G. C. W*

Gettysburg

At Gettysburg in sixty-three,
  The fiery sun of fierce July
Stood breathless in the heavens to see
  How hung a nation's destiny
Upon a conflict raging high!
  He watched with boldly blazing eye
The flower of Southern chivalry

Charge through the Union lines to die
At Gettysburg!

Where heroes fought so valorously
On either side for victory,
That all the world's posterity
Will lift their praises to the sky.
A nation's dead in honor lie
At Gettysburg! — *Susie M. Best*

Do You Know What It Means?

"Do you know what it means, you boys and girls
Who hail from the North and the South!
Do you know what it means,
This twining of greens
Round the silent cannon's mouth;
This strewing with flowers the grass-grown grave;
This decking with garlands the statues brave;
This flaunting of flags,
All in tatters and rags:
This marching and singing;
These bells all a-ringing;
These faces grave and these faces gay,
This talk of the Blue and this talk of the Gray,
In the North and the South, Decoration Day?

Not simply a show-time, boys and girls,
Is this day of falling flowers;
Not a pageant, a play,
Nor a holiday

Of flags and floral bowers;
It is something more than the day that starts
War memories a-throb in veteran hearts;
For, across the years,
To the hopes and the fears,
To the days of battle,
Of roar and of rattle —
To the past that now seems so far away,
Do the sons of the Blue and the sons of the Gray
Gaze — hand clasping hand — Decoration Day."

Little Nan's Offering

"The great wide gates swung open,
The music softly sounded,
And loving hands were heaping the soldier's grave with flowers;
With pansies, pinks and roses,
And pure, gold-hearted lilies,
The fairest, sweetest blossoms that grace the spring-time bowers.

When down the walk came tripping
A wee, bare-headed girlie,
Her eyes were filled with wonder, her face was grave and sweet;
Her small brown hands were crowded
With dandelions yellow —
The gallant, merry blossoms that children love to greet.

Oh, many smiled to see her —
That dimpled-cheeked wee baby,
Pass by with quaint intentness, as on a mission bound,
And, pausing oft an instant,
Let fall from out her treasures
A yellow dandelion upon each flower-strewn mound.

The music died in silence,
A robin ceased its singing;
And in the fragrant stillness, a bird-like whisper grew —
So sweet, so clear and solemn,
That smiles gave place to tear-drops:
'Nan loves 'oo, darlin' soldier; an' here's a f'ower for 'oo.''

The Blue and the Gray Together

Flowers for the men who lost,
Flowers for the men who won,
The Blue and the Gray together;
Out in the winter frost,
Out in the summer sun,
The Blue and the Gray together.

Tears for the fallen brave,
Never a word of blame,
The Blue and the Gray together,
Have each a quiet grave,
Have each a spotless fame,
The Blue and the Gray together.

Songs for a noble cause,
Songs for a new-born Hope,
The Blue and the Gray together;
Bring now the sweetest rose,
Lilies, and the heliotrope,
For the Blue and the Gray together.

The Blue and the Gray together,
Out in the summer weather,
Out in the wintry weather;
Sing thrush and robin o'er each lonely grave!
Sigh, gentle winds, and tell
To the pale asphodel,
"The Blue and the Gray sleep well, sleep well together." — *Independent*

A Daisy's Mission

"I am going to blossom," a daisy said,
"Though the weather is cold and bleak;"
"What for?" said a neighbor, lifting her head,
"It's too early yet by a week."

Said the daisy, "A voice is whispering 'Speed!'
So I'm wanted somewhere, I know,"
"Well, I am too wise such voices to heed —
How silly you are to go!"

Memorial Day dawned cool and bright,
The sun his warm rays gave,
And there gleamed a star of purest white
On a soldier's lonely grave. — *Selected*

Memorial Day

When the beautiful grass comes springing
So soft beneath our feet,
And the birds are once more singing
Their songs so clear and sweet;

When the bright spring flowers are peeping
O'er every hill and dale,
And silvery brooks go creeping
Through the green and mossy vale;

When all this lovely land of ours,
In vernal green is dressed,
We come, with hushed and reverent step,
To where the soldiers rest.

Bringing sweet flowers of Spring-time,
To strew with loving hand,
O'er the graves of the fallen heroes,
Who died to save our land.

And as the loyal children
Their grateful tribute bring,
As they hear the soldier's hardships told,
And of his brave deeds sing,

May each young heart feel thankful
To Him who reigns above,
That such a land is given him,
To cherish, guard and love.

And may each strive, with heart and hand,
To ever worthy be
Of the fair and noble father-land,
Loved home of liberty.

Memory Day

Round the still graves of the Gray and the Blue
Blossoms are springing spangled with dew,
Tenderly breathing, rosily wreathing
Over the graves of the Gray and the Blue.
So, the brave deeds of those heroes of ours
Round the years cluster and break forth in flowers.
Through the years coming
Fresh with love's dew,
God keep the deeds
Of the Gray and the Blue!

Round the dear graves of the Blue and the Gray
Perfumes, like blessings, wander to-day,
Everywhere blowing, coming and going
Over the graves of the Blue and the Gray.
So, from the deeds of those heroes of ours
Memories rise like the fragrance of flowers.
In the years coming
Hallowed alway,
God hold the deeds
Of the Blue and the Gray!

— *Alice E. Allen*

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